

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 PM-07 INR-10 L-03 NEA-10

NSAE-00 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03 USIA-15 TRSE-00

SAJ-01 DODE-00 AID-20 CEQ-02 COA-02 COME-00 EB-11

EPA-04 IO-14 NSF-04 NSC-10 SCI-06 SS-20 SCEM-02 FRB-02

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C O N F I D E N T I A L USNATO 5067

E.O. 11652: GDS, 12/31/79

TAGS: ETRD, ENRG, XH, NATO

SUBJECT: NATO PROPOSED SYMPOSIUM ON ENERGY

REF: A) USNATO 4895; B) STATE 205025; C) STATE 206883

SUMMARY: ECONOMIC COMMITTEE ON OCTOBER 22 CONSIDERED WHETHER EAST-WEST ENERGY COOPERATION SHOULD BE SUBJECT FOR JANUARY SYMPOSIUM OF ACADEMIC EXPERTS. ITALY AND GERMANY SPOKE IN FAVOR OF THIS TOPIC, BUT U.S., U.K. AND NETHERLANDS OPPOSED. NETHERLANDS PROPOSED COMECON TOPIC AS ALTERNATIVE, SECONDED BY U.S. HOWEVER, CHAIRMAN INSISTED THAT IT WAS TOO LATE TO CHANGE SUBJECTS, AND THAT ELIMINATION OF ENERGY TOPIC MEANS NOT HAVING JANUARY SYMPOSIUM AT ALL. CORRIDOR DISCUSSION INDICATES FEELING AMONG COMMITTEE MEMBERS THAT JANUARY SYMPOSIUM IS DEAD, DUE TO CHAIRMAN'S INFLEXIBILITY ON TOPIC. END SUMMARY.

1. ECONOMIC COMMITTEE MEETING ORIGINALLY SCHEDULED OCTOBER 18, AND TWICE POSTPONED DUE TO CONFLICT WITH BURDEN SHARING MEETINGS, WAS HELD ON OCTOBER 22. OTHER AGENDA ITEM (FUTURE WORK PROGRAM) REPORTED SEPTEL.
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2. ITALIAN REP LED OFF DISCUSSION BY STRONGLY SUPPORTING PROPOSAL FOR EAST-WEST ENERGY COOPERATION TOPIC. GERMANY ALSO SUPPORTED ENERGY TOPIC. COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN (LAULAN) TURNED TO U.S. REP, OBSERVED THAT U.S. WAS ONLY COUNTRY NOT YET APPROVING ENERGY

TOPIC, AND ASKED WHAT WAS U.S. POSITION ON EAST-WEST TOPIC. U.S. REP STRONGLY OBJECTED TO THIS TOPIC ON THE BASIS OF ONE ARGUMENT: THAT IN VIEW OF MIDDLE EAST CRISIS, PUBLIC SYMPOSIUM ON EAST-WEST ENERGY COOPERATION WOULD LOOK LIKE AN EFFORT BY NATO COUNTRIES TO MITIGATE POSSIBLE OR ACTUAL ARAB OIL EMBARGO BY EXPANDING ENERGY COOPERATION WITH EAST. THIS MIGHT HAVE UNDERSIRABLE IMPACT ON NATO COUNTRIES' ENERGY RELATIONS WITH BOTH ARABS AND EAST.

3. UNITED KINGDOM REP (WITH WHOM WE HAD PREVIOUSLY DISCUSSED THE PROBLEM) THEN STATED THAT ALTHOUGH HE DID NOT HAVE INSTRUCTIONS, HE WAS SURE THAT LONDON'S POSITION IN VIEW OF MIDDLE EAST CRISIS IS NOW THE SAME AS THAT OF U.S. NETHERLANDS REP OBSERVED THAT MIDDLE EAST CRISIS HAD GIVEN HIM MISGIVINGS ABOUT ENERGY TOPIC ALSO, AND IN ANY EVENT, SINCE U.S. AND U.K. WERE OPPOSED, THERE WAS NO CONSENSUS: THEREFORE, COMMITTEE SHOULD CHOOSE ANOTHER SUBJECT, AND HE PROPOSED COMECON TOPIC. U.S. REP SECONDED NETHERLANDS PROPOSAL.

4. CHAIRMAN THEN STRONGLY DEFENDED TIMELINESS AND UTILITY OF ENERGY TOPIC. HE REPEATED OFFER TO RESTRICT PUBLICITY, BUT NETHERLANDS REP REPLIED IT WOULD THEN NO LONGER BE A SYMPOSIUM. CHAIRMAN AT ONE POINT REFERRED TO COMECON TOPIC AS "SILLY" BY COMPARISON WITH ENERGY TOPIC. THIS RESULTED IN SHARP EXCHANGE BETWEEN CHAIRMAN AND DANISH REP (COMECON TOPIC WAS ORIGINALLY THE LATTER'S IDEA). CHAIRMAN THEN STATED THAT IT WAS TOO LATE TO CHANGE SUBJECTS: UNLESS A CONSENSUS DEVELOPED IN COMMITTEE WITHIN ONE WEEK IN FAVOR OF ENERGY TOPIC, THERE WOULD BE NO SYMPOSIUM.

5. COMMENT: ECONADS' DISCUSSION OF ENERGY SYMPOSIUM TURNED OUT VERY WELL FROM U.S. POINT OF VIEW. U.S. WAS NOT ISOLATED IN OPPOSING ENERGY TOPIC, IN VIEW OF U.K. AND DUTCH SUPPORT, AND DANISH EXCHANGE WITH CHAIRMAN. U.S. ABILITY TO SUPPORT COMECON TOPIC (THANKS TO REFTTEL B), AND CHAIRMAN'S INFLEXIBILITY, CAST THE CHAIRMAN AND NOT THE U.S. IN THE ROLE OF OBSTRUCTIONIST. CORRIDOR DISCUSSION FOLLOWING THE MEETING INDICATED FEELING AMONG
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COMMITTEE MEMBERS THAT JANUARY SYMPOSIUM IS NOW DEAD DUE TO CHAIRMAN'S INFLEXIBILITY ON TOPIC.
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